



## African Servals



### HEALTH

Height: 20-26" at the shoulder

Length: 24-36" long

(tail length equivalent to 1/3-1/2 the length of its head)

Weight: Male: 40 lbs.; Female: 20 lbs.

Lifespan: 15-20 years in captivity



### OVERVIEW

The Serval (*Leptailurus serval*) is a medium-sized African wild cat. The length is 85 cm (34 in), plus 40 cm (16 in) of tail, and the shoulder height is about 53 cm (21 in). Weight can range from 9 to 20 kg (20-44 lbs). Life expectancy is about 12-20 years. It is a slender animal, with long legs and a fairly short tail. The tall, oval ears are set close together. The pattern of the fur is variable. Usually, the Serval is boldly spotted black on tawny. The "servaline" form has much smaller, freckled spots. In addition, melanism is known to exist in this species, giving a similar appearance to the black panther. White servals are white with silvery grey spots and have only occurred in captivity.

Its main habitat is the savanna, although melanistic individuals are more usually found in mountainous areas. The Serval needs watercourses within its territory, so it does not live in semi-deserts or dry steppes. It is able to climb and swim, but it seldom does so. It has now dwindled in numbers, due to human population taking over its habitat and hunting it for its pelt. It is protected in most countries. The Serval is listed in CITES Appendix 2, indicating that it is "not necessarily now threatened with extinction but that may become so unless trade is closely controlled."